

Is Your Child Safe from Lead Poisoning? Know the Facts*

FACT: Lead is harmful to children.

- Lead can damage a child's brain and nervous system.
- Lead exposure is especially dangerous for children under the age of six because their rapidly growing and developing bodies absorb more lead.
- Lead poisoning can cause permanent learning and behavioral problems that make it difficult for children to succeed in school.

FACT: Most children get lead poisoned from deteriorating lead paint from homes built before 1978 or from soil containing lead from gasoline residue when:

- Lead-based paint chips or peels,
- Lead-based paint is disturbed during repairs or renovations,
- Lead contaminates soil along roadways, near buildings, or near homes,
- Lead dust from paint and soil accumulates in and around homes,
- Lead dust settles on bare soil around the home where children play,
- Lead dust settles on toys, fingers, and other things children put in their mouths.

FACT: A blood lead test is the only way to know if a child has lead poisoning.

- Most children with lead poisoning do not look or act sick.
- Children at risk for lead exposure should be tested at both one and two years of age.
- At-risk children three- to six-years old who were not tested at ages one and two should have a blood lead test.



FACT: Free blood-lead testing is available for most children.

- Parents can talk to their child's doctor about getting tested for lead.
- Children who receive services from Medi-Cal or Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) are eligible for free testing. To find out about eligibility for Medi-Cal, call 1-800-880-5305.
- Private health insurance plans may also pay for the test.

FACT: Parents and caregivers can help prevent childhood lead poisoning by:

- Wiping clean or taking off shoes before entering the home,
- Washing children's hands and toys often,
- If lead-based paint is on any surface inside or outside the home, wet mop and wash the surfaces often.
- Before painting or remodeling, always follow lead-safe work practices.

For more information, contact:

Amador County Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 209-223-6407.

*Excerpted from California Department of Public Health Fact Sheet on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention.

For more information visit:

[CA Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch](#)

[US EPA's Learn About Lead Webpage](#)